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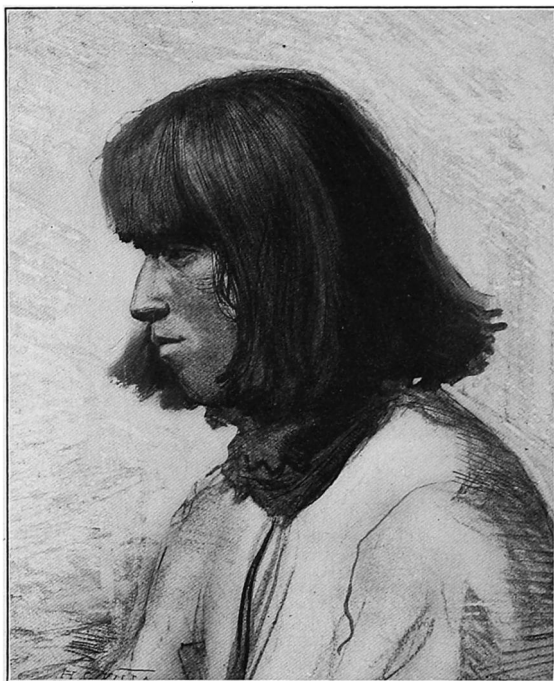
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HOT BLAST FOR THE VILLA MEDICI

"The Villa Medici is a superannuated institution which serves no purpose whatever, either good or bad, and which is possessed of no character."

This surprising statement is made by Camille Maclair in the *Revue Bleue*. The Villa Medici, it should be borne in mind, is the place of study of the winners of the Prix de Rome, one of the most coveted prizes in the Paris art world. Year after year the winners are acclaimed as the most fortunate of young artists, whose future is already assured. M. Maclair accuses the donors of the Prix de Rome of being "more concerned with making creatures and of perpetuating doctrines than of seeing young people properly educate themselves," and of conferring benefits "only for passive obedience."

He represents them as speaking to the young painters in this way: "You will have none of our method? Then you shall have nothing. You shall be pariahs, refused at the Salon, the irregulars, the bohemians; you shall receive no orders, ribbons, honors, titles; you shall be beyond the pale of the law and the state will ignore you, for the state is an office and we are the head of the division of the beautiful. It is true that the revolt of Delacroix, of Courmet, of Manet, of Degas, of Monet, and other destroyers of art; the



CHARCOAL, FROM LIFE
By Student of the Macleod Art School, Los Angeles

rebellion of Rodin, Dalou, Indy, Debussy have compromised our prestige, and these people have even the audacity to reach the public without us, to live by their work, to enjoy real glory; but we are still the head of the office of the beautiful; the bourgeoisie respect us, the state maintains us, and you must look to us."



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M. Maclair's criticisms are confirmed by American art students who have studied in Paris. A former pupil in the atelier of Julien declared that the whole tendency of the preparation for the Prix de Rome contest and of the period spent at the Villa Medici was in the direction of the repression of individuality. "The candidates are at the mercy of their masters," he said. "Their subjects and manner of treatment are prescribed for them, and the student who should dare to work along original lines would soon be made to feel the weight of his master's displeasure. On the walls of Julien's

studio are written the names of many winners of the Prix de Rome in the past, and not one of them has ever been heard of outside Paris, and seldom there. Their work in Rome is nothing but the copying of classical models in the manner approved in Paris, and their own ideas are undeveloped. The leaders of the conventional, reactionary school in Paris have the power of appointment, and no man who has ideas of his own need apply. The successful candidates are really less to be congratulated than the losers. Left to their own devices in Rome, they learn nothing, save in a stereotyped manner, which forever prohibits their independent development."

T. C.